

Jesus' Prayer of Consecration

John 17

Introduction

1. Concluding the discourse of Jesus with His chosen apostles which made final preparations for their ministry Jesus prayed to God (**v. 1** – **“these words”** – of the previous chapters), and did so for them to hear – **cf. John 11:41-42; (v. 13** – **speaks these things I their hearing for their benefit)**
2. Overall, it is a prayer of consecration – **“And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.” (v. 19)**
 - a. **“And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.” (ESV)**
 - b. Jesus both prays that God would glorify Him (**v. 1**) as well as He intends to consecrate Himself to fulfilling the work of His Father.
 - c. This consecration of Jesus ensures the consecration of the apostles, as well as those who would believe through their word (**v. 20**).
3. Jesus' prayer is filled with important things to consider:
 - a. It is an example – at His most important hour as He is about His Father's business Jesus is spending time in thoughtful prayer.
 - b. A lesson – the prayer is didactic, i.e. it teaches us great and important truths.
 - c. An exhortation – the prayer encourages us who read it and study it to engage in meaningful discipleship and embrace God's plan for us in Christ.
4. Jesus has engaged with His disciples for the final time in the upper room, preparing them for carrying on His work as His ambassadors after He departs, and now He prays to the Father to ensure the success of the most important work to ever take place in the history of God's people, as well as the history of the world.
- I. Jesus' Prayer for Himself (**17:1-5**)
 - A. Jesus Asks the Father to Glorify Him So That He Can Glorify the Father (**vv. 1-3**)
 - a. (**v. 1**) – His **“hour”** which has been anticipated has finally come.
 - i. It is the hour of His death, but in His death there is victory, and His death is followed by exaltation – **12:31-33 (“lifted up”** – *hypsōō* – exalted) (**cf. Philippians 2:5-11**)
 - ii. **13:31-32** – glorified through His work on the cross, God glorified in that work, glorified by God in the resurrection and ascension.
 - iii. (**v. 1c**) – in being exalted to heaven and taking the throne in His kingdom, Christ can continue His work and thus glorify the Father. (**cf. Ephesians 3:20-21** – to God be glory in the church by Christ)
 - b. (**v. 2**) – Jesus Has been given authority to give eternal life.
 - i. This is ultimately to take place as Jesus reigns from heaven, sending His word to the world through the apostles.
 - ii. **5:24-25; 6:44-45** – His authority and those given Him are inseparable – they are those who listen to His word and believe.
 - c. (**v. 3**) – His mission was to bring men in to fellowship with God through His revelation of Him – this will continue as He reigns from heaven. (**14:6**)

- B. Jesus Has Finished His Work the Father Gave Him to Do (vv. 4-5)
 - a. It has been His food – 4:34; 9:4-5
 - b. His final act on the cross is decided – He will submit to His Father's will (cf. Matthew 26:39).
 - c. (v. 5) – when the work is finished, He will return to heaven, receive a kingdom, and reign. (16:28)
- II. Jesus' Prayer for the Apostles (17:6-19)
 - A. Jesus Has Revealed the Father to the Apostles and They Have Believed Him (vv. 6-8)
 - a. (v. 6) – manifested the Father's name – John 1:14, 18 – His character and person – full of grace and truth – cf. Colossians 2:9
 - i. Those given Jesus by the Father – John 7:16-18 – they were truly desirous of pleasing God, and therefore recognized Jesus as sent by Him.
 - ii. They were Israelites indeed – John 1:47
 - b. (vv. 7-8) – their faith has been a work in progress, and still is, but Jesus Himself asserts the validity of their professed faith in Jesus' nature, and His teaching.
 - i. Peter – John 6:67-69
 - ii. All – John 16:29-30
 - c. ***"I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them"*** – As the Father gave Jesus words to reveal, the apostles are also being given words to reveal – next, Jesus prays for such work He leaves them to do.
 - B. Jesus Prays for the Father to Keep the Apostles as He Returns to Him (vv. 9-13)
 - a. (vv. 9-10) – those given Jesus by the Father are also His, as He is united with His Father.
 - i. ***"I am glorified in them"*** – as the Father is glorified in the Son whom He sent, so the Son is glorified in those He sends.
 - ii. ***"the world"*** – is not the object of Christ's prayer, but not due to indifference, but because it is the apostles who are sent to impact the world.
 - b. (vv. 11-12) – the men given to Jesus by the Father were entrusted to Him, but now He leaves, and prays for their protection.
 - i. He had kept them – ultimately, spiritually – John 13:10; 15:3
 - ii. Now He prays for the Father to keep them ***"in Your name"*** – i.e. by His power and character.
 - iii. ***"that they may be one as We are"*** – must not let influence of the world – sin and error – divide them, but be united in the Father and the Son.
 - iv. **Judas** – was lost because he resisted truth and yielded to Satan (John 13:2).
 - c. (v. 13) – He utters these words aloud while still physically present with them to grant them assurance and joy as Jesus did in His ministry.

- C. Jesus Prays for the Father to Sanctify the Apostles in the World by His Truth **(vv. 14-19)**
- a. **(v. 14)** – now that they belong to Jesus by faith, they are met with the same response by the world – **John 8:23-24, 37, 42-44; 15:18-19** – they are not of the world.
 - i. What has led them to be distinguished from the world are the words Jesus had given them, keeping them while He is with them – **(vv. 8, 12, 14a)**
 - ii. Now, in His departure, the pressure and attacks from the world will only increase, but He will not be present to keep them.
 - b. **(vv. 15-17)** – this part of the prayer would mean a great deal to His apostles, who had just been told by Him that the world would seek to destroy them **(16:1-4)**.
 - i. **(v. 15a)** – The solution is not for them to be removed from the world – how else would they be able to fulfill God's will in Christ to seek to save the world?
 - ii. **(vv. 15b-16)** – However, if they do not remain distinct from the world there will be no influence **(cf. Matthew 5:13)** – light must expose the darkness.
 - iii. **(v. 17)** – the truth of the Father, which is the same as the Son, and what is fully revealed by the Spirit **(16:12-15)**, is what will keep them set apart from the world.
 - c. **(vv. 18-19)** – the Father sent Jesus, and Jesus sends the apostles – to seek and save the lost **(cf. Luke 19:10)**.
 - i. **(v. 19)** – Jesus must consecrate Himself to the ultimate work God sent Him for in order to be in the position to send the Spirit and send the apostles on their mission.
 - ii. **(15:26-27; 16:7)** – they need the Helper, but Jesus must go away in order to send Him.
- III. Jesus' Prayer for Those Who Believe on Him Through the Apostles' Word **(17:20-26)**
- A. Jesus Prays for the Unity of Those Who Believe in Him Through the Apostles' Word **(vv. 20-21)**
 - a. Jesus had prayed that the apostles would be unified by being kept by the Father's name – **(v. 11)**
 - b. **(v. 20)** – as Jesus had led the apostles to belief by His word, the apostles would lead others to belief by their word – Jesus prays for these believers.
 - i. This growth of believers would be the accomplishment of Jesus seeking to glorify the Father – **(vv. 1-2)** – bringing men into fellowship with God.
 - c. **(v. 21)** – the glory brought to the Father through this apostolic work would be achieved in the unity of believers.
 - i. The Father and Son are not divided.
 - ii. Division of believers would not bring glory to the Father.

- iii. As believers united in truth and love, the world would believe in Christ, and the Father – **13:35; 14:23**
- B. Jesus Gives Glory to Ensure the Unity (**vv. 22-23**)
 - a. (**v. 22**) – Jesus gives believers glory to ensure they are united with each other in the Father and Son.
 - i. He gives them this glory through His suffering – **Hebrews 2:9-10; 2 Peter 1:17** – makes them a child of God well pleasing to God.
 - ii. As they are made children of God, they are united as family, and engaged in the same will of the Father, led by the same Spirit – **cf. Ephesians 2:17-18, 22**
 - b. (**v. 23**) – this unity is through abiding in the Father's love, as Jesus had, which brings men to Christ – **15:9-10**
- C. Conclusion – A Summary (**vv. 24-26**)
 - a. The ultimate goal is to bring believers into eternal fellowship with God consummated in heaven – (**v. 24**)
 - i. One day He will make a return to receive forever those the Father had given Him, and they will see His true form, and partake in it – **1 John 3:1-3**
 - ii. As Jesus' return to glory is a part of the Father's expression of love (**v. 24b**), so our reception of glory is an expression of His love.
 - b. (**vv. 25-26**) – this is a concise summary of Jesus' ministry on earth, and its continuation through the apostles given the Spirit.
 - i. (**v. 25**) – the relationship of believers to the Father through Christ.
 - ii. (**v. 26**) – the work of Jesus in declaring the Father for their participation in the love of God.

Conclusion

1. For three years, Jesus had walked the earth seeking to bring men out of the world and into fellowship with His Father.
2. As that time neared its end, Jesus prepared Himself for the ultimate act to secure redemption for any who would come to the Father through Him.
3. The chosen apostles would play a vital role in Jesus bringing people to the Father, and He prayed fervently for them.
4. Lastly, Jesus prayed with confidence for those who would indeed come to Him and the Father through the apostles' work.
5. This chapter should impress us with the love Jesus has for His Father's will, and for us who are brought into fellowship with Him by the truth. It should spur us on to great efforts to grow in the truth and keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.